

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF INVESTIGATION

In respect of

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RECORDING

at

WHITHORN PRIORY
SIGNAGE INSTALLATION

for

Historic Environment Scotland

by

Kirkdale Archaeology



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9th October 2015

INTRODUCTION

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A programme of archaeological works conducted by Kirkdale Archaeology is required in order to monitor the work associated with the proposed installation of a new signage at Whithorn Priory (Fig. 1).

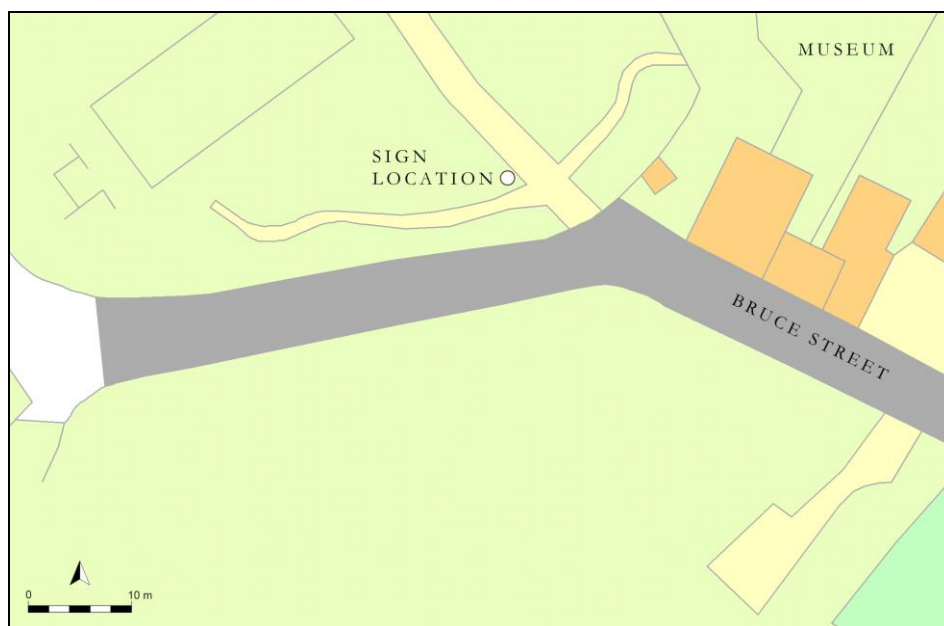


Figure 1: Plan showing the approximate location of the sign.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Whithorn Priory was founded about the middle of the 12th century by Fergus, the Lord of Galloway, (d.1161) during the reign of King David I of Scotland (d.1153).

Whithorn was long a noted place of pilgrimage, owing to its connection with the venerated memory of Saint Ninian, and many Scottish sovereigns, among them Margaret (queen of James III), James IV, and James V, made repeated pilgrimages to the saint's shrine.

The whole property of the priory was vested in the Crown by the annexation act of 1587, and was granted in 1606 by King James VI to the occupant of the See of Galloway when he established Episcopalianism in Scotland in that same year.

The priory church, which served also as the cathedral of the diocese, had a long nave without aisles, a choir of about the same length, and a lady chapel beyond. In 1684 the nave and western tower were still intact; but the existing remains consist only of the roofless nave and the extensive vaulted crypts constructed under the eastern end of the church.

F I E L D W O R K

The installation of the new sign is in a grassed area adjacent to a fork in the road to the south of the monument. The work will see an area of turf, c.1m x 1m removed (by hand), to a depth of c.0.1m. Once removed, the exposed topsoil will be levelled. Given the shallow nature of the work, the potential of impact to any archaeological deposits or historic fabric caused by the installation of the sign is minimal.

M O N I T O R I N G

This will entail:

- The presence on site of at least one site archaeologist during all ground breaking works.
- The archaeologist should be able to direct rate, location and method of excavation employed by contractor.
- The archaeologist should suspend excavation if necessary, in order to examine / clean / retrieve any archaeological features, surfaces, structures or artefacts that may be exposed during excavation.
- All spoil will be suitably stored for examination before backfill/reinstatement.

A R C H A E O L O G I C A L R E C O R D I N G & E X C A V A T I O N

This will entail:

Drawing

- Confirmation of site plan as supplied by the Client.
- Location plan of all interventions at a suitable scale, 1:50/1:100.
- Detailed, individual area plans of all interventions – at significant stages of excavation if appropriate and on completion of excavation, drawn at a scale of 1:20.
- All sections, or a representative selection, will be drawn in detail at a scale of 1:10.
- All drawing will be annotated with site feature numbers, site code, scale, date and name(s) of staff.

Photography

- Still photographs will be colour digital and will record general location of works, plus detailed coverage during, and on completion of, excavation.
- All photographs will have a suitable scale visible.
- All photographs will be listed in a full photo register (describing content, orientation and date).
- 'Documentary' photographs will also be taken in order to represent site conditions, constraints and resources.
- If appropriate, digital moving coverage will be taken for further illustration of site conditions, constraints and resources.

Site Recording: Buried Archaeology

- Description of all excavated material will be expressed in terms of archaeological features, each of which will be assigned a unique three-digit number. The numbering will also reference the site code and any individual trench number.
- Each discrete feature will be described on site *pro forma*, which will cover stratigraphic relationships, finds, physical description, location, drawing references and interpretation.
- Each feature will also be listed in a feature register – comprising a brief description, date, and feature number.

Sampling

When required, three levels of sampling are proposed for above and below ground investigations:

- **General:** Bulk sample per context removed.
- **Special:** Specific sample identified for later specialist study (charcoal, industrial waste, environmental, infestations, organics).
- **Specialist:** Monitoring of any independent sampling strategy from external specialists (dendrochronological, mortar, paint, *etc.*)

GENERAL ISSUES

In the event of the discovery of significant remains and/or artefacts, which may be impacted by the proposed works, excavation should be suspended until further instruction is received from relevant agencies. At this point the Historic Environment Scotland CRT should also be informed and consulted.

All artefacts, faunal remains and samples will be processed off-site. Disposal and/or examination/conservation of this material will be assessed in the light of results of fieldwork. Any programme of specialist post-excavation work on finds, faunal remains and analysis of samples will be assessed on completion of the fieldwork

Any human remains revealed during the excavation will remain *in situ*. All discoveries of human remains will be reported to the local police and Historic Environment Scotland CRT.

If human remains are to be excavated during any subsequent work, this will be completed in line with Historic Environment Scotland policy on the treatment of human remains.

REPORTING

The results of the Fieldwork and DBA will be presented in an illustrated Data Structures Report (DSR) with accompanying digital documentation as specified by the Historic Environment Scotland CRT.

Copies of the report and digital files will be produced as specified. Typically this comprises:

- Four bound paper copies.
- Two digital versions on CD including all photographs (the latter in tiff or jpeg format).

This will include an assessment of all assemblages and recommendations for any further specialist work.

A costed programme for the full sample analysis towards publication of the findings will be included if appropriate.

A short note will be submitted to 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' and OASIS.

The position of all trenches, excavation areas *etc.*, will be supplied on CD disk, as a georeferenced .dxf file.

Reports will be submitted within 20 working days of completion of the fieldwork.

ARCHIVE

If there is no further requirement for reporting beyond the DSR and D&E entry, the report and site records will be compiled in a suitable archive comprising primary data and digital documentation as appropriate, suitable for submission to local and national archives.

The archive will follow current guidelines for archival standards set by the Archaeology Data Service and Historic Environment Scotland.

The project archive will be deposited with the NMRS within six months of completion of fieldwork and relevant post-excavation analyses. Finds will be subject to the Scots laws of Treasure Trove and *Bona Vacantia*, and will be reported to the Crown Agent for disposal. Appropriate conservation of finds will be conducted before disposal.

Gordon Ewart
9th October, 2015